

2016 THURSTON COUNTY DEMOCRATIC RESOLUTIONS

2. Steps to a Just and Enduring Peace in Israel/Palestine

(Adopted May 23, 2016)

WHEREAS all Israelis and Palestinians must be assured equal human rights and the ability to live in freedom, security, and peace; and Israel's military occupation of Palestinian land, and discriminatory laws and practices, violate international law, creating major obstacles to freedom, security, and peace for all in the region;

WHEREAS the U.S. Government and international human rights groups have documented repeated human rights abuses by the Israeli military using U.S. weapons against civilians in the Occupied Territories; and the U.S. Government with \$3 billion annually in direct military aid sustains Israel's occupation, violates the U.S. Arms Export Control Act which prohibits use of U.S. weapons against civilians and the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act which prohibits assistance to any country engaging in a consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights, and with this support engenders hostility from people throughout the world;

WHEREAS Palestinian refugees represent the longest suffering and largest refugee population in the world today; the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international conventions stipulate that "Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and return to his country;" and UN Resolution 194, allowing for the right of Palestinians to return to their homeland, has been affirmed by the UN General Assembly over 110 times since its introduction in 1948;

WHEREAS the International Court of Justice determined that the construction of an illegal separation barrier and illegal settlements on Palestinian land alter the demographic composition of the Occupied Territory and impede the right of Palestinians to self-determination, and that all States should not recognize or give aid to maintain the situation;

WHEREAS right to boycott, divest, and sanction has been exercised as free speech in struggles for independence, civil rights and labor movements, and to oppose South African apartheid;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we support and demand equal human rights for Palestinians and Israelis;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we suspend military aid to Israel when Israel does not comply with U.S. trade and assistance laws;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support and demand the right of return for Palestinian refugees, or just compensation;

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we oppose Israel's separation barriers and settlement activities and reject moving the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem prior to final resolution;

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we support and protect the time-honored right to exercise freedom of speech through Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS), a strategy currently employed at the grassroots level to challenge the illegal Israeli occupation and the decades-long failure of governments to realize peace with justice for all people of Israel and Palestine.